

Message Text

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CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-10 SR-02 ORM-01 IO-10

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SUBJ: PROGRESS REPORT: NO. 3 TITLE II RICE PROGRAM MARCH 11
OVERALL STATUS REPORT

REF: (A) STATE 47266 (B) PHNOM PENH 4159

1. SUMMARY. THE PRESENT TELEGRAM IS A STATUS REPORT ON JOINT ACTIONS TAKEN ON MARCH 11 IN FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW TITLE II RICE PROGRAM IN CAMBODIA. A WORKING MEETING BETWEEN MINISTRY OF REFUGEES' OFFICIALS, U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES' STAFFS AND U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS AGREED ON AN INCREASED DAILY DISTRIBUTION OF FREE RICE TO REFUGEES AND NEEDY PERSONS. VOLUNTARY AGENICES RECEIVED APPROVAL OF THEIR PLANS FOR ASSURING CITY-WIDE DISTRIBUTION OF FREE RICE AND AN IMMEDIATE SURVEY TO LOCATE AND IDENTIFY ALL OF THE CITY'S NEEDY WILL BE LAUNCHED.

2. THE FREE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE II RICE TO THE NEEDY PEOPLE OF PHNOM PENH WAS THE SUBJECT OF A MEETING ON MARCH 11 BETWEEN CAMBODIAN REFUGEE AUTHORITIES, USAID OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WORKING WITH REFUGEES AND OTHER DEPRIVED PEOPLE. AS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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FIRST ITEM OF BUSINESS, MINISTER KONG ORN ANNOUNCED A MAJOR

REVISION IN THE EXISTING RICE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM. UNDER THE CURRENT QUOTA SYSTEM, REFUGEES AND NEEDY FAMILIES CAN PURCHASE UP TO 200 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY FROM VARIOUS SOURCES. FOR THE REFUGEES, VOLUNTARY AGENCIES DISTRIBUTE AN ADDITIONAL 150 GRAMS FREE OF CHARGE. THE MINISTER INCREASED THIS FREE DISTRIBUTION TO 300 GRAMS, THUS MAKING 500 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY AVAILABLE FROM ALL SOURCES. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE INSTRUCTED TO INCREASE IMMEDIATELY THEIR FREE DISTRIBUTIONS TO 300 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY.

3. THE U.S. AGENCIES, CARE, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, AND WORLD VISION RELIEF ORGANIZATION, ALONG WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS, AGREED WITH A MINISTRY PLAN TO DIVIDE THE CITY INTO FOUR DISTRICTS WITH EACH AGENCY HAVING PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE NEEDY IN ITS ASSIGNED AREA. USING PRELIMINARY DATA ALREADY AVAILABLE, EACH AGENCY WILL BEGIN DISTRIBUTION OF THE 300 GRAMS OF TITLE II RICE: CRS ALREADY LAUNCHED ITS PROGRAM ON MARCH 7, CARE WILL BEGIN ON MARCH 18 AND WVRO SHORTLY THEREAFTER; ICRC WILL BEGIN ITS PROGRAM AS SOON AS FEASIBLE. THE AGENCIES ARE AUGMENTING THEIR LOCAL STAFF, RESOLVING THEIR OWN SUPPLY PROBLEMS AND RECALCULATING THEIR RICE REQUIREMENTS BASED ON THE NEW FORMULA. EACH AGENCY IS EXERCISING ITS OWN JUDGMENT ON WHETHER TO DISTRIBUTE THE TITLE II RICE IN DRY OR COOKED FORM BASED ON THE CONDITIONS EXISTING WITHIN THE AREAS BEING SERVED.

4. THE DISTRIBUTION TO REFUGEES WILL CONTINUE ON THE EXISTING PATTERN WITH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES RETAINING THEIR CURRENT ASSOCIATION WITH REFUGEE SITES, WHEREVER LOCATED IN THE CITY. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, HOWEVER, THESE DISTRIBUTIONS WHICH CONSIST OF A MONTH'S SUPPLY OF RICE FOR EACH FAMILY MEMBER WILL BE INCREASED FROM 150 TO 300 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY. WHEN THE TITLE II PROGRAM WAS APPROVED, SOME AGENCIES HAD ALREADY PURCHASED TITLE I RICE ACCORDING TO THE OLD SYSTEM UNDER WHICH THE AGENCIES RECEIVED CAMBODIAN RIELS GENERATED BY THE U.S.-FINANCED COMMODITY IMPORT PROGRAM AND BOUGHT RICE FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION TO REFUGEES. MINISTER KONG ORN INSTRUCTED THESE AGENCIES TO DISTRIBUTE THESE TITLE I STOCKS ON THE BASIS OF THE NEW 300 GRAM QUOTA AND TO DRAW SUCH ADDITIONAL RICE FROM THE TITLE II STOCKS AVAILABLE IN PHNOM PENH AS WOULD BE NEEDED TO MEET THEIR FULL REQUIREMENTS.

5. IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH MORE ACCURATELY THE NUMBERS OF NEEDY
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PEOPLE IN THE CITY, THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS, TEACHERS, LOCAL WARD LEADERS AND STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SURVEYS. THE REFUGEE MINISTER WILL ADDRESS A MASS MEETING ON MARCH 13 AND ENLIST THE COOPERATION OF THESE GROUPS TO ASSIST IN THE CONDUCT OF THE SURVEY AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO ADVISE THE NEEDY IN THEIR LOCALES ON HOW TO AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THIS NEW TITLE II ASSISTANCE. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE CENSUS IS TO IDENTIFY THOSE FAMILIES IN DIRE ECONOMIC STRAITS: NO JOBS, NO

INCOME, SHODDY LIVING CONDITIONS, NOTHING TO EAT. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IN THE CENSUS ARE SUCH SPECIAL GROUPS AS WAR WIDOWS, ORPHANS, HOSPITAL PATIENTS, AND INVALIDS. THE CENSUS WORKERS WILL COMPLETE THEIR TASKS UNDER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS TOWARD THE OBJECTIVE OF PRODUCING WORKING DATA WITHIN THREE WEEKS. SUCH DATA WILL CONSTITUTE THE BASIS ON WHICH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES CAN INCREASE THEIR DISTRIBUTION ACTIVITY. REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES OF TITLE II RICE WILL BE APPROVED IMMEDIATELY TO MEET THESE ADDITIONAL NEEDS.

6. THE DETERIORATION OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS HAS AFFECTED SOME REFUGEE CAMPS WHICH HAD BEEN CONSIDERED MONTHS AGO TO HAVE REACHED SELF-SUFFICIENCY. SOME, BUT NOT ALL OF THE RESIDENTS OF THESE AREAS, NEED ASSISTANCE. THE REFUGEE MINISTRY IS PREPARING A LIST OF THESE SITES AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WILL REVIEW CONDITIONS IN EACH SITE. BASED ON THEIR JUDGEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, FREE DISTRIBUTION OF THE 300 GRAM RICE ALLOWANCE WILL BE INITIATED. TITLE II STOCKS ARE AVAILABLE TO MEET SUCH REQUIREMENTS AS THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES DEVELOP.

7. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ARE REVISING THEIR COUNTRY-WIDE REQUIREMENTS USING THE NEW FORMULA OF 300 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY AND WILL SUBMIT THEIR PROPOSALS TO THE MINISTRY OF REFUGEES ON MARCH 12 FOR APPROVAL. THESE REVISED PROPOSALS WILL INCLUDE ESTIMATES OF THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES AND OTHER NEEDY PERSONS OUTSIDE PHNOM PENH. THESE PROPOSALS PLUS THOSE FOR PHNOM PENH WILL SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR CALCULATING CAMBODIA'S TOTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE UNDER THE TITLE II PROGRAM AND PROVIDE THE DATA REQUIRED TO PUT THAT RICE INTO PLACE TO BENEFIT THE REFUGEES AND THE NEEDY. THIS INCREASED DISTRIBUTION TOGETHER WITH RICE AVAILABLE THROUGH OTHER SOURCES SHOULD SOON APPROACH THE GOAL OF PROVIDING AT LEAST 500 GRAMS PER PERSON PER DAY TO THE ENTIRE REFUGEE AND OTHER NEEDY POPULACE.

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